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cometti in which the life of the poetess is dramatized, in the making of the book. It is, therefore, a labor of love, but none the less creditable to the author and his nation, as evidence of their far-reaching interest in literature, and flattering to us.

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#### AN UNNOTED SOURCE OF *L'Allegro*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—The various editors of the works of Milton have determined many of the sources of *L'Allegro*, but one source seems to have been unobserved. I refer to the introductory verses of the narrative lyric, 'The Sunne when he had spred his raies,' which appeared in the second edition of Tottle's *Miscellany*, among the poems attributed to 'Unknown Authors.' The opening verses of the poem read as follows:

- The Sunne when he had spred his raies,  
And shewde his face ten thousand waies,  
Ten thousand things do then begin,  
To shew the life that they are in.  
5 The heauen shewes liuely art and hue,  
Of sundry shapes and colours new,  
And laughs vpon the earth anone.  
The earth as cold as any stone,  
Wet in the tearcs of her own kinde:  
10 Gins then to take a ioyfull minde.  
For well she feesles that out and out,  
The sunne doth warme her round about,  
And dries her children tenderly,  
And shewes them forth full orderly,  
15 The mountaines hye and how they stand,  
The valies and the great maine land,  
The trees, the herbes, the towers strong,  
The castels and the riuers long.  
And euen for ioy thus of his heate,  
20 She sheweth furth her pleasures great.  
And sleepes no more but sendeth forth  
Her clergions her own dere worth,  
To mount and flye vp to the ayre,  
Where then they sing in order fayre,  
25 And tell in song full merely,  
How they haue slept full quietly  
That night about their mothers sides.  
And when they haue song more besides,  
Then fall they to their mothers breastes,  
30 Where els they fede or take their restes.  
The hunter then soundes out his horne.  
And rangeth strait through wood and corne.  
On hilles then shew the Ewe and Lambe,  
And euery yong one with his dambe.  
35 Then louers walke and tell their tale,  
Both of their blisse and of their bale,  
And how they serue, and how they do,  
And how their lady loues them to.

(Arber's reprint, p. 230.)

The general similarity of this succession of morning pictures to those in *L'Allegro* is of course apparent, but the correspondence is not

merely a general one. Thus with verses 1-6, compare *L'Allegro* 60-62:

Where the great Sun begins his state,  
Robed in flames and amber light,  
The clouds in thousand liveries dight.

With verses 15-18, compare *L'Allegro* 73-78:

Mountains on whose barren breast  
The labouring clouds do often rest;  
Meadows trim, with daisies pied;  
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;  
Towers and battlements it sees  
Bosomed high in tufted trees.

With verses 31-32, compare *L'Allegro* 53-56:

Oft listening how the hounds and horn  
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,  
From the side of some hoar hill.  
Through the high wood echoing shrill.

With verses 35-38, compare *L'Allegro* 67-68:

And every shepherd tells his tale  
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Ever since Warton first proposed that 'the word *tale* does not here imply stories told by shepherds, but that it is a technical term for *numbering sheep*,' opinion has been divided as to the meaning of this last couplet. In support of his position, Warton cites W. Browne, *Shepherd's Pipe* (1614), *Egl. v.*:

Where the shepheards from the fold,  
All their bleating charges told;  
And, full careful, search'd if one  
Of all the flock was hurt or gone;

and Dryden, *Vergil, Bucol. 3, 33*:

And once she takes the *tale* of all my lambs.  
(Todd, *Milton's Poet. Wks.* (1842) 3, 394.)

On the other hand, the more popular interpretation, that the shepherd talks of love, is, as Masson observes, 'more pleasing,' and it is a custom as old as the Greek pastoral life. This interpretation receives weighty support from the comparison instituted above.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gavin Douglas's *Proloug of the twelt buik* (cf. Warton, III, 220 f.), which for other reasons should be kept in mind in connection with the poem cited from Tottle's *Miscellany*, is also sympathetic with that other 'tale' that always will be told:

And thochtful luffaris rowmys to and fro  
To leis thar payne, and plene thar joly wo;

but the satisfaction of a 'more pleasing' conclusion, the abettor of many a popular fallacy, must be restrained when, as in the present instance, there is no escape from the tamer satisfaction of advocating what is indisputably clear.—J. W. B.